

Appl. No. 09/996,338
Amdt. dated December 8, 2003
Amendment under 37 CFR 1.116 Expedited Procedure
Examining Group

PATENT

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

- 1-3. (Canceled).
4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 19 wherein the plurality of different unrelated technology developers exchange documents with the server via the public Internet.
5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 19 wherein the patent application is filed in the patent office with a correspondence mailing address set to an address associated with the server instead of an address associated with the first technology developer.
6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 5 further comprising, receiving from the patent office, paper correspondence related to the patent application that is mailed to the server system address, scanning the paper correspondence to create a scanned, electronic copy of the correspondence and storing the scanned, electronic copy of the correspondence in the database.
7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6 wherein the scanned, electronic copy of the correspondence is viewable over the Internet by selected client system associated with the first technology developer.
8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 19 wherein the plurality of invention disclosures are generated by responding to questions presented to client systems by the server via a Web page.
9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 19 wherein documents and data associated with each invention disclosure are stored in the database and viewable over the Internet to client systems as determined by an access management portion of the server.

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10. (Canceled).

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 19 wherein the patent application is filed in the patent office electronically in response to the request.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 19 wherein the patent applications is printed on a printer coupled to the server system and subsequently filed in the patent office by mail in response to the request.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 19 wherein the electronic documents include scanned versions of papers sent from a patent office.

14-18. (Canceled).

19. (Previously Presented) A method of managing documents related to a plurality of patent applications, the method comprising:

for a plurality of different and unrelated technology developers, allowing client systems from each such technology developer to create a plurality of invention disclosures for each respective technology developer;

receiving the plurality of invention disclosures for each technology developer at a server system over a network and storing the plurality of invention disclosures for each technology developer as electronic documents in a database accessible to the server system;

storing, in the database, additional electronic documents associated with at least some of the plurality of invention disclosures for each technology developer;

maintaining and enforcing rights to electronic documents in the database such that at least some client systems associated with each technology developer in the plurality of technology developers can access selected ones of the electronic documents associated with invention disclosures created for the respective technology developer and such that client systems associated with a particularly technology developer cannot access electronic documents in the database associated with invention disclosures of other unrelated technology developers in the plurality of technology developers;

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maintaining and enforcing rights to electronic documents in the database for client systems associated with a plurality of patent firms such that at least some client systems from selected ones of the patent firms have rights to view selected invention disclosures stored in the database and selected electronic documents stored in the database associated with the selected invention disclosures and create and modify patent applications prepared for the selected invention disclosures;

receiving any such created patent application at the server system and storing it in the database;

maintaining and enforcing rights to file patent applications in a patent office for client systems associated with the plurality of law firms such that only selected client systems from the law firms have rights to file patent applications in the patent office; and

electronically receiving a request from a client system to file a particular patent application for a first technology developer in the plurality of technology developers, determining if the client system has appropriate rights to file the particular patent application and, if so, causing the patent application to be filed in the patent office in response to the request.

20. (Previously Presented) A server system for managing intellectual property; the system comprising:

a processor;

a database, coupled to the processor, for storing a plurality of electronic documents related to a plurality of invention disclosures for a plurality of different and unrelated technology developers, wherein the plurality of electronic documents include invention disclosures, patent applications and additional documents associated with the invention disclosures and/or patent applications;

an invention disclosure creation component that allows client systems from each of the plurality of technology developers to create invention disclosures for the respective technology developer each client system is associated with and store the invention disclosures in the database as electronic documents;

a patent application creation component that allows client systems associated with a plurality of patent firms to create and modify patent applications prepared for selected

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invention disclosures stored in the database and store the patent applications in the database as electronic documents;

a document management and access component that maintains and enforces rights to electronic documents in the database such that (i) at least some client systems associated with each technology developer in the plurality of technology developers can access selected ones of the electronic documents associated with invention disclosures created for the respective technology developer, (ii) client systems associated with a particular technology developer cannot access electronic documents in the database associated with invention disclosures of other unrelated technology developers in the plurality of technology developers and (iii) at least some client systems from selected ones of the patent firms have rights to view selected invention disclosures stored in the database and selected electronic documents stored in the database associated with the selected invention disclosures and create and modify patent applications prepared for the selected invention disclosures;

a patent application filing component that, in response to receiving a request from a client system to file a particular patent application, determining if the client system has appropriate rights to file the particular patent application and, if so, causing the patent application to be filed in the patent office in response to the request.